

### REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-2 and 4-16 are pending in the application.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2, 5-9 and 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. 6,310,589 (Nishigaki) in view of U.S. 2002/0005696 (Yamazaki). Further, claims 4 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Nishigaki in view of Yamazaki in view of U.S. 6,469,455 (Inoue). It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-2 and 4-16 are patentable over Nishigaki, Yamazaki and Inoue for at least the following reasons.

The rejected claims are patentable over Nishigaki, Yamazaki and Inoue at least because those references, taken individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the elements recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 9 and 12, which requires for example (illustrative emphasis provided):

an amplifier having a first input connected to the first current path, a second input connected to a second current path, and an **output is connected via a switch to a controlling connection of the driving transistor.**

These features are nowhere taught or suggested in Nishigaki, as correctly noted by the Examiner on page 3 of the Office Action. Yamazaki is cited in an attempt to remedy the deficiencies in Nishigaki. As clearly seen from FIG 23 of Yamazaki, the output of the amplifier 706 is directly connected to the control terminal of transistor 708, and thus is not connected via a switch, as recited in independent claims 1, 9 and 12. Thus, Nishigaki, Yamazaki, alone or in combination do not disclose or suggest an amplifier having output "connected **via a switch** to a controlling connection of the driving transistor," as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 9 and 12. (illustrative emphasis provided) Inoue is cited to allegedly show other features and does not remedy the deficiencies in Nishigaki and Yamazaki.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 9 and 12 are allowable. In addition, claims 2, 4-8, 10-11 and 13-16 are allowable at least because they depend from independent claims 1, 9 and 12, as well as for the separately patentable elements contained in each of the dependent claims.

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of record, allow all the pending claims, and find the application in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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April 21, 2008

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